



172d STRYKER Brigade Artillery - Arctic Thunder-On Time!



4th Battalion 11th Field Artillery Regiment

Family Readiness Group
Deployment Training
4 and 5 January 2005



Sequence of Events

- Welcome
- Effects of Deployment on Children
- FRG Events and Activities

Preparing for Deployment: Communicating with your Children and Students

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Workshop Objectives

- A quick overview of deployment and it's effects on the family
- Examine how children respond to crisis and stress
- Provide strategies to assist with a child's concerns or issues
- Consider how you can help kids adjust to homecoming
- Identify helpful and reliable sources of assistance

Effects of Deployment on Mothers & Fathers

- These separations are more complicated for women
- Adds new stress to marriage
- Brings out existent problems
- Reunion is often more complicated for men

Effects of Deployment on Children

- Research has found that behaviors such as Fighting, defiance, anger, anxiety, sadness, and school difficulties are common among military children with absent fathers



Effects of Deployment on Children

- Research has also found that children whose fathers experienced a peacetime separation of six months or less exhibited temporary emotional and behavioral difficulties
- Short separations can account for a significant portion of a young child's life

Effects of Deployment on Children



In contrast, children whose fathers were deployed during the Gulf War showed no improvements in behavior over time. This phenomenon may be explained by:

- The extensive television coverage of the war and children's inability to interpret these events
- Children's sensitivity to reunion adjustments
- Children's concern about future deployments

Toddler –Preschool (Ages 1-5):

- Thumb sucking
- Bed-wetting
- Fear of dark, animals, or being left alone
- Clingy
- Resists being held
- Night terrors
- Eating problems
- Increase illnesses

Toddler –Preschool (Ages 1-5):

During

Infants

- Experience the stress of the caregivers
- May become:
 - Inactive
 - Unresponsive
 - Irritable
 - Hyperactive

Toddlers

- Increased separation anxiety
- May become:
 - Clingy
 - Withdrawn
 - Depressed

After

Infants

- Under 1 may not know parent upon return
- Reluctant to “go to” parent

Toddlers

- Slow to warm up
- Apprehensive
- Feel loyalty to parent not deployed

Toddler -Preschool

Things you can do:

- At Home and Pre-School:
 - ✓ Be patient with the child and yourself!!!
 - ✓ Play with child/children
 - ✓ Provide affection and forms of physical comforting
 - ✓ Provide frequent attention
 - ✓ Provide routines (such as bedtime)
 - ✓ Keep discussions with your children age appropriate
 - ✓ Be encouraging!
 - ✓ Make a calendar or build-in benchmarks for return

Toddler -Preschool

Things you can do:

- At Pre-School:
 - ✓ Increase physical activity to ward off stress response
 - ✓ Use art work to express feelings
 - ✓ Make daily personal checks with each child
 - ✓ Write cards or letters to deployed family members
 - ✓ Communicate any concerns to home parent
 - ✓ Use your training

Toddler –Preschool VIGNETTES

- At Home:
 - ✓ Child becomes consistently unresponsive to Mother
 - ✓ Child develops very erratic bedtime patterns
 - ✓ Consistently acts out while at the PX or Commissary
- At School:
 - ✓ Child will not leave teacher alone
 - ✓ Very outgoing child now does not interact or engage other students
 - ✓ Will not eat lunch in the cafeteria

Toddler -Preschool

Questions?

Early Childhood (ages 6-11)

- Often preoccupied with issues such as:
 - Good vs. Bad
 - Right vs. Wrong
 - Friend vs. Enemy

Early Childhood (ages 6-11)

- Clinginess
- Whining
- School phobia
- Irritable
- Aggressive behavior
- Competitiveness for parental attention
- Fear of harm and abandonment
- Anxiety and confusion (loss response)
- Lack of interest in school and other outside activities

Early Childhood (ages 6-11)

During

Preschoolers

- Regression
- May begin to:
 - Start fussing
 - Bed-wetting
 - Aggression

School age children

- Experience sadness & grief
- Fear for own safety
- Sleep disruption
- Moodiness
- Anger toward parent that left
- Anger toward family that is still at home

After

- Have feelings of guilt due to lack of understanding of cause and effect

- May want what seems like an excessive amount of extra attention

Early Childhood

Things you can do:

- At Home and School:
 - Show patience and tolerance
 - Allow the child to play with peers as well as yourself
 - Age appropriate discussions about fears and anxieties
 - Bring the expectations down a little
 - Provide opportunities for structured (but non-demanding) work around the house/classroom with you
 - Maintain as familiar of a routine as possible
 - Remember, your child is seeking security and attachment; this is a good time to build a sound relationship
 - Blend talks with activities

Early Childhood Things you can do:

- At School:
 - Increase physical activity to ward off stress response
 - Use art work to express feelings
 - Write in a journal
 - Make daily personal checks with each child
 - Write cards or letters to deployed family members
 - Communicate any concerns to home parent
 - Cross-talk with other teachers involved with child of concern
 - Use your training in an integrated fashion

Early Childhood - VIGNETTES

- At Home:
 - ✓ Child clings to home parent
 - ✓ Child does not want to go to school
 - ✓ Child becomes preoccupied with death
- At School:
 - ✓ Child will not participate in group activities
 - ✓ Child reverts to thumb-sucking
 - ✓ Child does not want to leave at the end of the day

Early Childhood

Questions?

Preadolescent (Ages 12-14)

- Sleep problems
- Rebelliousness
- Defiance => for example refusal to do chores
- Increase attention seeking behaviors
- School problems
- Appetite problems => overeating, bulimia, anorexia

Preadolescent (Ages 12-14)

- Anxiety => excessive worry
- Loss of interest in normal peer relationships or social activities
- General depression
- Increase in physical problems and psychosomatic complaints
- Anger (loss response)
- Denial

Pre-Adolescent

Things you can do:

- At Home and School:
 - ✓ Show patience and tolerance
 - ✓ Give individual attention to the child and engage in age appropriate discussion of issues etc.
 - ✓ Encourage child to do things with same aged peer groups
 - ✓ Continue household routine but in a less demanding manner
 - ✓ Relax expectations a little at home and school
 - ✓ Continue behavior management strategies (discipline) but in a more understanding manner
 - ✓ Talk about the changes that have occurred in everyone's life

Pre-Adolescent

Things you can do:

- At School:
 - Increase PE and physical activity
 - Use art work and poetry to express feelings
 - Use small group discussions
 - Write stories and write in a journal
 - Listen to music
 - Write cards or letters to deployed family members
 - Communicate any concerns to home parent
 - Cross-talk with other teachers involved with child of concern
 - Apply your training as with other stressful situations

Pre-Adolescent - VIGNETTES

- At Home:
 - Child has sleep problems
 - Child starts fights with siblings
 - Child spends home time in room
- At School:
 - Child starts fights with peers
 - Child refuses to follow instructions
 - Child experiences excessive weight-loss

Pre-Adolescent

Questions?

Adolescent (Ages 14-18)

- Common reactions to stress and crisis these kids face is:
 - Psychosomatic complaints and illnesses increase in body aches, headaches, rashes, etc.
 - Apathy
 - Guilt
 - Poor concentration
 - Decline in interest in opposite sex
 - Delinquent or self-destructive behavior (e.g., sex, substance abuse, etc.)

Adolescent (Ages 14-18)

- Common reactions to stress and crisis these kids face is:
 - Anger at perceived unfairness
 - Tendency to blame others for what happens to them
 - Appetite or sleep disturbances
 - Depression
 - Generalized Anxiety
 - Unnecessary tension

Adolescent (Ages 14-18)

During

- Have limited coping skills for the emotions that occur
- Distance themselves from others
- May become:
 - Resentful
 - Responsible

After

- May appear distant and seem uncaring about the return
- May have a problem relinquishing acquired responsibility of head of household

Adolescent

Things you can do:

- At Home and School:
 - ✓ Again, patience and tolerance are keys to successful communication
 - ✓ Encourage participation in family activities, but don't insist on it
 - ✓ Be respectful of what they have been through while you were gone and that they have changed also
 - ✓ Discuss their plans for the future
 - ✓ Be honest with them about your experiences
 - ✓ Encourage discussion of feelings and issues with friends and family
 - ✓ Monitor music and hobby activities
 - ✓ Try to spend some time with them doing what they want to do

Adolescent

Things you can do:

- At School:
 - ✓ Encourage increased PE, organized sports participation
 - ✓ Use art work, story writing, and poetry to express feelings
 - ✓ Use small group discussions
 - ✓ Write in a journal
 - ✓ Listen to encouraging music
 - ✓ Write cards or letters to deployed family members

Adolescent

Things you can do:

- At School:
 - ✓ Practice deep breathing and relaxation techniques
 - ✓ Teach/develop problem solving strategies
 - ✓ Encourage participation in support groups
 - ✓ Communicate any concerns to home parent
 - ✓ Cross-talk with other teachers involved with child of concern
 - ✓ Apply your training as with other stressful situations

Adolescent - VIGNETTES

- At Home:
 - ✓ Child listening to excessively violent music
 - ✓ Child ceases to function as a part of the family
 - ✓ Child initiates a screaming match of the wills
- At School:
 - ✓ Child stops responding to reinforcements
 - ✓ Child skips school/classes
 - ✓ Child's participation style changes

Adolescent

Questions?

Where to go for help:

- Friends and Family
- Chain of Command
- Chaplain
- Clergy
- Professionals
- School Counselors
- Army Resources

Conclusions:

1. Creep in on discipline!
2. Be patient and tolerant
3. Take time for yourself
4. Be honest with yourself and your family



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Battalion Commander



Reasons to Stay in AK during

Deployment

- Will not have military network or Family Readiness Groups available
- LES, pay issues, childcare issues, admin issues and related services not avail
- COLA for dependents stops
- Housing is lost as well as command sponsorship
- BAH changes
- TRICARE/Medical may not be covered, increase in medical costs
- AER may not be available (not close to an installation), needed for emergency travel, car breaks down, etc
- Communication – support system here to answer questions
- Notification can take a lot longer
- Access to get ID cards
- Living expenses could increase because you don't have PX or commissary
- No ACS or School Liaison available to help children deal with deployment.



FRG Fair

- One stop shopping for many of the financial, legal, and personnel actions necessary for deployment
- Tue, Wed, Thu and Fri 0900-1200
 - Lawyers will be available 0900-1600
 - Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri
- 4-11 FA BN Classroom
 - (Bldg 3424 Luzon Ave)



FRG Fair

- Fort Wainwright Legal Office
 - 1 lawyers and a clerk (Wills, POAs, Questions)
- 4-11 FA Personnel Actions Center (allotments, TSP, Home of Record)
- 4-11 FA S-6 (AKO account set up for soldiers and spouses)
- 4-11 FA Yearbook sign up
- Post Education Center
- Local Financial Institutions
 - MAC Federal credit Union
- The unit is **not** mandating participation or contact with these financial institutions, merely providing convenient access to ease your deployment preparation if you desire.



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FRG Training

- Jan 05
 - ✓ Effects of Deployments on Children
- Mar 05
 - ✓ JRTC Deployment Brief



FRG Events and

Activities

- 22 Jan Bowling
 - 1700-1900, free shoes, only \$2 per person
 - Discounted food
- 12 Feb, Free Ice skating PFC
 - 1500-1700
- 5 March Tubing at Birch Hill Ski Hill (tentative)
 - 1700-2000
- 9 April Fielson Rec Center Fun Room